

## Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CU-02 AID-05 IGA-02 CIAE-00  
INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 /034 W  
-----010419Z 016593 /21

R 310813Z MAY 77  
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3746

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 NEW DELHI 7718

PASS TO AMBASSADOR MARSHALL GREEN OES

CALCUTTA 1281 FOLLOWS. SENT TO NEW DELHI FOR ACTION ON 26 MAY 77.  
BEING RPT FOR YOUR ACTION/INFO.

QUOTE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CALCUTTA 1281

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: SCUL, IN  
SUBJ: FAMILY PLANNING IN WEST BENGAL

SUMMARY: WE HAVE BEEN TRYING TO FIND OUT WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO FAMILY PLANNING IN WEST BENGAL (WE DON'T HAVE ACCESS TO ENOUGH INFORMATION TO STUDY THE PROBLEM IN OTHER STATES) SINCE THE LOK SABHA ELECTIONS. WE STARTED WITH THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE ROLE PLAYED BY STERILIZATIONS IN THE CONGRESS PARTY'S DEFEAT IN MARCH HAD SERIOUSLY DAMAGED AND PERHAPS EVEN KILLED THE PROGRAM. WE FOUND THAT THIS MAY NOT BE SO. THE PROGRAM IS CONTINUING, BUT IT IS LESS INTENSIVE AND WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY NOT BE ENOUGH TO ACHIEVE THE OFFICIAL GOAL OF SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCING THE BIRTH RATE IN WEST BENGAL WITHIN THE NEXT DECADE.

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1. OFFICIALS OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE FAMILY PLANNING AGENCIES IN WEST BENGAL ARE OPTIMISTIC THAT THE SETBACK WILL PROVE TEMPORARY. THEY ARGUE THAT STERILIZATION WAS NOT A MAJOR ISSUE IN THIS STATE AND THAT LACK OF FUNDS FROM THE GOI IS THE MOST IMPORTANT OBSTACLE TO CARRYING OUT A VIGOROUS PROGRAM NOW. OFFICIALS FORESEE SOME SHIFT IN EMPHASIS, BUT NO MAJOR POLICY CHANGES. OUR SOURCES MAY BE BIASED TOWARDS A

POSITIVE VIEW AND WE HAVE, OF COURSE, NOT BEEN ABLE TO MAKE A FIELD SURVEY OF OUR OWN. NEVERTHELESS WE THINK THEIR COMMENTS SHOW THAT POPULATION CONTROL EFFORT IS BEING PURSUED.

2. ACCORDING TO SEVERAL SOURCES, EFFORTS OF THE GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS TO POPULARIZE FAMILY PLANNING IN WEST BENGAL HAVE INCREASED POPULAR AWARENESS. DR. A.N. DUTTA, PROJECT DIRECTOR OF THE FAMILY PLANNING ASSOCIATION OF INDIA (FPAI) SAYS THAT ALTHOUGH HE DOES NOT AGREE WITH SOME OF THE COERCIVE METHODS WHICH WERE USED DURING THE EMERGENCY TO PROMOTE STERILIZATION, HE BELIEVES THAT "THE EXTENT, IF NOT THE NATURE OF THE EXCESSES MAY HAVE BEEN EXAGGERATED". OTHERS HAVE TOLD US THE SAME THING, AND ARGUE THAT IN WEST BENGAL, IN PARTICULAR, LITTLE COMPULSION WAS USED. IN FACT THE ADVERSE PUBLICITY WHICH THE FAMILY PLANNING EFFORTS OF THE CONGRESS GOVERNMENT IN SOME STATES AROUSED SEEMS TO "HAVE SUCCEEDED IN BRINGING FAMILY PLANNING TO THE FOREFRONT OF THE PUBLIC CONSCIOUSNESS".

3. FAMILY PLANNING OFFICIALS THINK THAT AS A RESULT, LARGE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY WOMEN, HAVE ACCEPTED THE IDEA OF FAMILY PLANNING. DUTTA SAID THAT SINCE THE BEGINNING OF IFY 1977, ALTHOUGH NO CASH COMPENSATION IS BEING PAID, WOMEN HAVE BEEN COMING FOR STERILIZATION. THIS MAY IMPLY THAT ALTHOUGH CASH COMPENSATION ACTS AS AN INCENTIVE, IT IS NOT THE ONLY REASON WHY PEOPLE WANT TO LIMIT THEIR FAMILIES.

4. ALL OF THOSE WITH WHOM WE SPOKE SAID THAT THE NEW GOVERNMENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MENT WAS EMPHASIZING THAT NO FORCE OR COMPULSION WOULD BE USED IN FAMILY PLANNING. ACCORDING TO AN OFFICIAL WHO HAD BEEN THERE, RAJ NARAIN, CENTRAL MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE, MADE THIS POINT AT RECENT MEETING WITH STATE HEALTH OFFICIALS. WHEN THE MINISTER WAS QUESTIONED WHETHER ESTABLISHMENT OF TARGETS DID NOT INTRODUCE ELEMENT OF COMPULSION IN FAMILY PLANNING, HE IS SAID TO HAVE QUIPPED, "WERE YOU COMPELLED TO ATTEND THIS MEETING?" IMPLICATION WAS THAT THERE WAS AN ELEMENT OF COMPULSION IN MANY THINGS PEOPLE DO AND THAT IT COULD NOT BE AVOIDED.

5. ALTHOUGH WEST BENGAL HAS A FAMILY PLANNING TARGET, NO QUOTAS HAVE BEEN SET FOR BUSINESS FIRMS, CIVIL SERVANTS, TEACHERS OR DOCTORS. SUCH QUOTAS OF COURSE HELPED THE STATE ACHIEVE ITS TARGET, BUT THEY CAUSED MANY COMPLAINTS AND SPECIALISTS IN THE MEDICAL PROFESSION WHO OFTEN HAD TO WASTE THEIR TIME FULFILLING THE FAMILY PLANNING QUOTAS INSTEAD OF DOING WORK THEY HAVE SPECIALIZED IN.

6. THE FAMIL PLANNING TARGET FOR WEST BENGAL FOR IFY 1977 HAS BEEN SET. THE TARGETS FOR IFY 1976 AND 1977, AND THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF 1976 ARE AS FOLLOWS:

	TARGET '76	ACHIEVEMENT '76	TARGET '77
STERILIZATIONS	392,000	880,000	360,000
IUCD	39,500	27,500	77,300
CONVENTIONAL			
CONTRACEPTIVES	214,000	224,000	241,000

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ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CU-02 AID-05 IGA-02 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 /034 W

-----010420Z 004446 /21

R 310813Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3747

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PASS TO AMBASSADOR MARSHALL GREEN OES

7. NO OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT HAS YET BEEN MADE REGARDING THE SCHEME OF GIVING CASH COMPENSATION TO PERSONS STERILIZED. ACCORDING TO GOWB OFFICIALS, THE GRADED SYSTEM, WHEREBY THE AMOUNT OF COMPENSATION PAID VARIED ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN A PERSON HAD, WILL BE ABOLISHED AND REPLACED BY A STANDARD RATE OF COMPENSATION. THIS RATE HAS NOT YET BEEN DECIDED BY THE CENTER. THE SCHEME OF PAYING A PROMOTER RS. 5 FOR EACH PERSON HE BRINGS FOR STERILIZATION MAY ALSO BE ABOLISHED.

8. WITH THE CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT THERE SEEMS TO BE AN INCREASING EMPHASIS ON HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE, OF WHICH FAMILY PLANNING IS CONSIDERED AN INTEGRAL PART. FOR EXAMPLE, THE INDIAN FERTILITY RESEARCH PROGRAM (IFRP) HAS A SCHEME TO LINK FAMILY PLANNING WITH A COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH PROGRAM. THIS "BAREFOOT DOCTORS" SCHEME INVOLVES TRAINING LARGE NUMBERS OF PARA-PROFESSIONALS TO DEAL WITH MINOR AILMENTS AND TO SEND THEM OUT INTO THE COUNTRYSIDE WHERE THEY WOULD

PROVIDE HEALTH SERVICES ALONG WITH CONTRACEPTIVES. IN THIS PROGRAM, IFRP PLANS TO DISTRIBUTE PILLS, WHICH THEY HAVE FOUND TO BE QUITE ACCEPTABLE TO ILLITERATE WOMEN IN RURAL AREAS. THE WEST BENGAL FPAI PROGRAM (WHICH COVERS A POPULATION OF 600,000 IN SELECTED SLUMS AND INDUSTRIAL AREAS),  
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ASIDE FROM PROVIDING THE USUAL FAMILY PLANNING AND HEALTH FACILITIES, HAS A SCHEME TO INTRODUCE POPULATION EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS TO TEACH "THE PARENTS OF TOMORROW" THE DANGERS OF OVER POPULATION.

9. OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT THE FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM IN WEST BENGAL IS ABOUT WHERE IT WAS BEFORE GREAT EMPHASIS WAS GIVEN IT DURING EMERGENCY. ONCE THE GOI BUDGET IS PASSED, PROVIDING FUNDS FOR FAMILY PLANNING ACTIVITIES, THE PROGRAM WILL RESUME AT A REASONABLE LEVEL. WEST BENGAL HAS NOT EXPERIENCED THE COMPLETE REVULSION FROM FAMILY PLANNING REPORTED ELSEWHERE BUT THE URGENCY GIVEN TO THE PROGRAM DURING THE EMERGENCY, WHEN IT WAS THE NUMBER ONE PRIORITY OF EVERY DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, IS GONE. ALTHOUGH WE EXPECT THERE WILL BE SOME PROGRESS, WE DOUBT THAT A MORE RELAXED APPROACH CAN ACHIEVE THE GOVERNMENT'S GOAL OF REDUCING THE BIRTH RATE IN WEST BENGAL FROM 39 PER 1000 IN 1974 TO 30 PER JQPPP IN JQUO AND SUBSTANTIALLY FURTHER IN THE 1980'S.

KORN

UNQUOTE  
GOHEEN

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## Message Attributes

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**To:** STATE  
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